





SKETCHES
DESCRIPTIVE OF
PICTURESQUE SCENERY,
ON THE SOUTHERN CONFINES OF
PERTHSHIRE.

William MacDonald Esq.

from the Rev. Dr.
P. G.

SKETCHES
DESCRIPTIVE OF
PICTURESQUE SCENERY,
ON
THE SOUTHERN CONFINES
OF
PERTSHIRE ;
INCLUDING
THE TROSACHS, LOCHARD, &c
TOGETHER WITH
NOTICES
OF
NATURAL HISTORY.

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EDINBURGH :
PRINTED FOR PETER HILL,
(PRINTER TO THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND,)
AND W. HUNTER, PARLIAMENT SQUARE,
BY THOMAS TURNBULL, CANONGATE.

—Φ—
1806.



TO
MRS CUNINGHAME GRAHAM
OF
GARTMORE,
THESE
S K E T C H E S
OF
PICTURESQUE SCENERY,
WHICH SHE OFTEN SEES, AND JUSTLY
APPRECIATES,
ARE,
WITH GREAT RESPECT,
INSCRIBED
BY HER MOST OBEDIENT
AND OBLIGED SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	Page
I. <i>Road to the Trosachs by Doune and</i>	
<i>Callander</i>	1
<i>The Teith</i>	3
<i>Pass of Leney</i>	4
<i>Benledi</i>	6
<i>Loch Venachar</i>	10
<i>The Trosachs</i>	13
<i>Benivenow</i>	15
<i>Coirre nan Uriskin</i>	19
<i>Etymology—Trosachs, Loch Ketturin</i>	22
<i>Natural History</i>	24
<i>Season for visiting the Trosachs</i>	28
II. <i>Road to the Trosachs by Aberfoyle</i>	32
<i>Buchanan</i>	34
<i>Gartmore</i>	37
<i>Aberfoyle Inn</i>	39
<i>Craig Vad View of the Trosachs</i>	41
<i>Vale of Aberfoyle</i>	44
<i>Lochard</i>	50
	<i>Upper</i>

	Page
<i>Upper Lochard</i>	53
<i>Benlomond</i>	58
<i>Lake of Menteith</i>	68
<i>Animals and Plants of this district</i>	72
<i>Soil and Climate, with Meteorological remarks</i>	76
<i>Character and Manners of the people</i>	84
<i>Peculiar and Local Circumstances</i>	96
<i>Superstitions of the Highlanders</i>	103
<i>Daoine Shith, or Shi'</i>	106
<i>Druids</i>	112

ERRATA.

Page 17. 2d line from the bottom, for "water's," read "winter's."

Page 62. line 13, for "Northwest," read "North East."

Page 65. line 1. for "elegant Alpine," read "elegant natives of the Alpine."

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE County of Perth, throughout its whole extent, has been long celebrated for the beauty and sublimity of its scenery. But that district, which lies immediately on its confines, towards the southwest, and borders on Stirlingshire, has, of late years, attracted, in a peculiar manner, the attention and admiration of Travellers. Whilst Killin, Taymouth, Blair in Athole, Dunkeld and Perth, with many other situations in this extensive county, exhibit scenes of exquisite beauty and grandeur ; the picturesque environs of Callander ; the sublime magnificence of the Trossachs ; and the milder beauties of Lochard, and of the Vale of Aberfoyle, must strike and delight every Traveller of taste.

Some respectable Gentlemen who visited these scenes last summer (1805), with high admiration, seemed to desiderate such a description of this district as might

serve, at the same time, to attract the attention of strangers, and to point out to the Visitor, the most interesting objects of notice, whether in Scenery, or in Natural History. These Gentlemen were pleased to urge the Writer of these pages to undertake such a description.

He may at the same time, be permitted to observe, that a circumstance had occurred to him several years ago, which, without any merit on his part, may be considered as qualifying him, in some slight degree, for this undertaking. When the Messrs Boydells of London, in 1792, proposed to publish the description of the four rivers, the Thames, the Severn, the Clyde, and the Forth, from their sources to the Sea; they employed the ingenious Mr Farrington of the Royal Academy, to execute the drawings of the adjacent scenery. The author of this Sketch had the happiness to attend that accomplished artist for several days, while he was employed in the district which it is

now proposed to describe ; and it was his office to accompany the delineations of the pencil with a verbal description of the scene, which Mr Farrington afterwards revised.

The proposed work of the Boydells having been long ago abandoned, the writer now considers himself at liberty to employ the notes which he took down, on those occasions, for Mr Farrington ; and he hopes, that they will be found of some service, at least, to young artists by suggesting the points of view which were chosen by so eminent a master ; as well as the mode by which he constructed his outline.

As few districts in Scotland offer a more fertile field to the Botanist than this, the rarer native plants are enumerated, and the labour and uncertainty of finding them is lessened, by pointing out the particular places of their growth. It is hoped that general Readers will forgive these notices, for the sake of the lovers of Natural History,
many

many of whom are attracted to this quarter every summer : and they will forgive also the omission of the English names of the plants, as most of those mentioned are of such rarity, that they have not yet obtained English denominations. A few, however, which have obtained names in our language, are subjoined at the bottom of the page. . Occasional remarks are added on the minerals, the soil, the climate, and meteorology of this part of the Highlands : some account is given of the language, the manners, and history of this country ; and of the popular superstitions which still prevail.

<i>Linnean Names.</i>	<i>English Names.</i>
Hypericum Androsæmum	Shrub St John's Wort.
Vaccinium Myrtillus	Whortle Berry, or Blae Berry.
Vaccinium Oxycoccos	Crane Berry.
Scirpus Palustris	Bull Rush.
Nymphæa -	Water Lily.
Erica -	Heath.
Trollius Europæus	Globe Flower.
Osmunda Regalis	Royal Flowering Fern.
Empetrum Nigrum	Crow Berry.
Solidago Virgaurea	Golden Rod.
Circæa Lutetiana	Enchanter's Night Shade.

SKETCHES

OF

PICTURESQUE SCENERY, &c.

THE TROSACHS, one of the most remarkable Scenes that occur in Britain; or, in the opinion of many intelligent Travellers,—in all Europe, are most conveniently approached from the East and North of Scotland by the route of Doune and Callander; and from the South and West, by Drymen, Gartmore, and Aberfoyle.

I. BY DOUNE AND CALLANDER.

THE village of Doune, distant from Stirling eight miles, is situated on the northern banks of the River Teith, which is here of considerable breadth, and runs, with a rapid current, over a rocky bed.

A

The

The Castle of Doune, formerly a royal residence, now a ruin, exhibits still a striking monument of ancient grandeur. From the road, on the west of the Castle, looking eastward, a fine picture offers itself to the pencil—Stirling Castle, and the adjacent rocks in the back ground: with Doune Castle, the Teith, the plantations of Blair-Drummond and Newton, immediately under the eye. But the finest view of the Castle, is, in the opinion of Draughtsmen, to be had from the N. E.

Leaving Doune, by the road to Callander, distant eight miles, you travel along the northern banks of the Teith, passing through many pleasing scenes, and leaving behind several elegant Country-seats;—Cambus Wallace, now Doune-Lodge, where Lord Doune is at present erecting a noble mansion, on the right; farther on, Cambusmore on the left; and Lanrick Castle, the magnificent seat of Sir John MacGregor Murray, Bart. on the south side of the river.

Nothing

Nothing can be imagined more delightful than the surrounding Scenery, and the situation of the village of Callander. The village is neat, clean, and well built; and an Inn has been lately built by Francis Macnab of Macnab, Esq. for the accommodation of travellers, in a style of elegance and comfort equal to any thing that is to be met with in the Highlands of Scotland.

Here the River first assumes the name of Teith, the *Taichus* of Buchanan; the Avon Thaich of the Highlanders. The etymology of the name is uncertain, but it may be proper to remark that the name Menteith, by which the adjacent Country is denominated, is unknown in the Gaelic: it is uniformly called *Taich*. The Teith is formed by two Rivers which unite, a few hundred yards above Callander; the one on the right, having its source in Loch Voil in Balquhiddar, issues immediately from Loch-lubnaig, by the romantic pass of Leney; joins the southern branch, which
has

has its origin in Loch Ketturrin, passes through the Trofachs, through Loch Auchray, and Lochvenachar; and at length, uniting with the Balquihidder branch, forms the Teith.

The Traveller, while at Callander, must not omit to visit the very interesting Scenery of the Pass of Leney. To describe it would be a fruitless attempt: It is certain that, without actual observation, or at least, the substitute of accurate drawings, nothing impresses itself upon the mind more faintly than verbal descriptions of Landscape. The Writer, with a very vivid idea fixed in his own imagination, of the particulars of a Scene which had engaged his feelings, and with which he is even most intimately acquainted, may labour, with much expence of words and of imagery, to convey his ideas to others; but without drawings, or actual observation, it will be found that the principal effect of such a description shall only be to attract the stranger to the objects, and not to afford any previous adequate notion of them.

In

In this view, it must suffice, as on many other occasions in this Sketch, to observe that the Pass of Leney, in a continued series of falls of the River, from Loch-lubnaig to Kilmahog, through a declivity of probably no less than 200 feet, with the addition of a beautiful skirting of wood, furnishes a feast to the eye, as well as to the ear which can be pleased with the Cataract's roar,—not often to be met with even in the Highlands.

The Bridge of Brac-Lynn (the white-foaming Linn or Pool) is highly worthy of the notice of the Traveller. It is situated about a mile up the hill, to the N. E. of the village. A narrow Alpine bridge crosses a profound ravine, through which, at a great depth below, dashes a foaming torrent, over disjointed masses of rock*.

A 2

But

* Since writing the above, I am informed by an intelligent friend, who has been on the spot later than myself, that the Bridge of Brac-Lynn has been recently renewed with fir boards, and secured by a double rail; which must add greatly to the comfort of the visitor who looks down
from

But the grand and distinguishing feature in the surrounding Scenery of Callander is the magnificent prospect of Benledi, bounding the horizon on the N. W. This mountain ranks with the first rate *Beinns* of Scotland. Its height is 3011 feet. The name Ben-le-di, signifies the *Mountain of God*. It was probably one of the public places of worship under the Druidical Hierarchy, though no monuments of that superstition are now to be found there: there is indeed, on the summit, which is of considerable breadth, a long walk of the smoothest turf, evidently formed by the hand of man. It is said, that on this mountain, in ancient times, the people of the adjacent district met on the first day of May, —to kindle the sacred fire, in honour of the

from this tremendous height. My friend, very justly remarks, "That local Scenery, such as this, affords a fine
 "contrast to General Views: of the latter kind," he adds,
 "there is a magnificent specimen, which was much ad-
 "mired by Mr Farrington, at the corner of the Larch-
 "wood, east from Callander, on the way to the above-
 "mentioned Bridge."

the Sun,—the *Belis* of the Cisalpine, and the *Belenus* of Aremoric Gaul*.

The southern side of this mountain is bare and tame: the eastern side, which overhangs Callander, is rugged and picturesque. But the N. E. side particularly, which overhangs Loch-lubnaig, is in an uncommon style of sublimity. From Ard-chullerie,—long the favourite residence of the Abyssinian Bruce,—it would appear that the mountain had been broken over at the summit, by some violent convulsion of nature; and that an enormous mass of its upper part had been tumbled over to the N. E. where it still lies in disjointed fragments.

Were it permitted in such a sketch as this, to introduce Geological observations, it might be remarked, that the appearance of this, as well as of many other mountains on the surface of the Globe, affords a fine illustration of the Theory of the ingenious Mr Kirwan,—“that the
“ Universal Deluge was occasioned by the
“ super-

* Herodian—Lib. VIII. Claudian—passim.

“ supernatural pouring in of the Pacific Ocean (*the Great Deep*) from the S. W. to the N. E.” He observes that all the mountains of the Earth bear the marks of this grand event; and that they are all broken over at the summit in this direction. The writer of this Sketch has only to observe, that in the instances of Goatfield in Arran, Benlomond in Stirlingshire; Benledi, Benivenow and Ben-vurlich, in Perthshire; together with several high mountains in Glencroe and Glenurrin, in Argyleshire, which he has had an opportunity of examining,—he has uniformly remarked the same appearance. Indeed, to every shepherd in the Highlands, it is well known that whilst the south-west side of the hill is bare of soil and vegetation, the north-east side is rich in soil and pasture; and to the philosopher, presents, at every step, the abundant traces of alluvial earth.

Besides these natural graces, the environs of Callander present many striking objects of ornamental beauty.

The

The *Roman Camp*, the elegant feat of Robert Fairfull, Esq. which presents a beautiful *Lusus naturæ*, resembling the lines of a Roman encampment, formed unquestionably, as in an instance which shall be mentioned (at Dounans, in Aberfoyle) by the workings of the river, before it had found its bed,—the beautiful villa of George Menzies, Esq. Chamberlain to his Grace the Duke of Montrose; the Minister's Manse, with many other delightful residences, contribute to render this as pleasant a spot as is to be met with in the Highlands of Scotland.

Before we quit Callander, it may be interesting to the Traveller to be informed, that in Dr D. the medical practitioner in this place, may be found all that skill, and attention, and humanity, which, in the occasional attacks of distemper, to which we are, at all times, and in all places, exposed, must be so desirable to strangers, in this sequestered situation.

When

When we leave Callander, the grand object is the Trosachs. The distance to the first opening of the Trosachs is about 10 miles. Those that would see, and examine, and know this interesting scenery, must travel more than 3 miles further. To do this with comfort, they must lay in some stores from the Larder and Cellars of Mr M'Gregor of the Inn. When we reach the Trosachs, I shall take the liberty to suggest, both to Mr M'Gregor and his guests, a far more comfortable scheme of accommodation.

Passing from Callander to the westward, by Kilmahog, you leave the commanding situation of Leney-house, the property of John Hamilton of Bardowie and Leney, Esq. on the right. From its beautiful environs, and respectable appearance, it would seem to be the seat of the Lord of the Manor of this neighbourhood. Two miles more bring the Traveller to the end of Loch Venachar (according to Dr R. *the fair plain*, but doubtful.) This Lake which has
great

great beauty and interest, is between 4 and 5 miles in length, and generally a mile and a half in breadth. Almost the whole of this Lake is finely skirted with wood; but the principal feature in the scene is the back-ground—before the eye, consisting of Benivenow, Binnan, and the ample outline of the Trosachs.

At Milntown, about a mile and a half from the east end of the Lake, there is a small cascade facing the south, in which (as in all other cascades similarly situated, and similarly formed,) the prismatic colours may, in a sun shine day, from 11 o'clock A. M. to 1 o'clock P. M. be observed as distinctly as in a prism of glass.

Leaving Loch Venachar about a mile, Loch Auchray (*i. e.* of the level field) about 2 miles long, opens upon the eye. It is one of the sweetest little Lakes in Scotland; the Northern bank, along which winds the road, close to the shore thro' an uninterrupted wood, * is finely contrasted

* —ἀσπετος ὕλη—Hom.

contrasted with the Southern bank, which is bare and heathy. The Trofachs, in all their magnificence, are now immediately before the eye. Perhaps no Traveller has ever passed by the west end of this beautiful little Lake, without forming the wish that he had a Summer residence, for a few weeks, either at the farm of Auchray, on the south of the River, or at Ard-cean-chrocan, on the North.

THE

THE TROSACHS.

THE remark that has been already made, will excuse from the task of entering on a verbal description of the Trosachs. This is, indeed, a scene which baffles all description. To be known, it must be seen.

Immediately on leaving Loch Auchray, you plunge into the Trosachs at once. It has been observed already, that in order to see all that is to be seen of this magnificent scenery, the Traveller must proceed more than three miles to the westward, nor will the toil seem tedious.

It must be remarked, that that part of the scenery which lies to the north of Loch Ketturrin, and the river which issues from it, including the mountain *Binnan*, is situated in the parish of Callander, and is the property of the Hon. Miss Drummond of Perth: whilst that which lies to the south, including *Benivenow*, is situated in

the parish of Aberfoyle, and is the property of his Grace the Duke of Montrose.

BINNAN.

BINNAN, on the north, presents a very singular appearance. Elevated high above the rugged precipices of the *Trosachs*, it is for 300 or 400 feet from the summit entirely conical, and appears so steep as to preclude all access. Its height is probably about 1800 feet.

BENIVE-

BENIVENOW.

BENIVENOW, in *Aberfoyle*, is perhaps one of the most picturesque mountains in Britain. Its height is about 2800 feet. On the north, (the aspect of the mountain which now presents itself,) besides the immense masses of rock, which appear in this and in all other mountains, to have been, by some convulsion of Nature, torn from the summit, the whole slope is covered, for two-thirds upwards, with alders, birches, and mountain ashes, of ancient growth; and sprinkled over the surface, with a grace and beauty unattainable by the hand of art. At the first opening of Loch Ketturrin especially, and for a considerable way along the Lake, the shoulder of Benivenow, stretching northward, in abrupt masses, towards the shore, presents a sloping ridge, elegantly feathered with birches, in a style which the pencil may, in some degree,

B 2

exhibit,

exhibit, but which verbal description cannot possibly represent.

Instead, therefore, of attempting the hopeless office of a describer, let me direct the observation of the Traveller to such objects as chiefly demand his attention, in this interesting spot.

On entering the Trosachs, let him remark on the right, the beautiful disposition into which Nature has thrown the birches and the oaks which adorn the projecting cliffs; let him remark the grouping of the trees, with their elegant figure and form. Some aged weeping birches will attract his eye; Binnan, and Benivenow, will present, at every step, varied pictures. In passing through the dark ravine that opens on Loch Kettur-in, whilst he admires again the disposition of the birches, the hawthorns, the hazels, and oaks, and mountain ashes; let him remark an echo, produced by the concave rock on the left, which, though too near to repeat many syllables, is remarkably distinct and loud. Immediately

ly on entering on Loch Ketturrin, let him attend to the magnificent masses of Benivenow, as they tumble in upon the eye from the south; there can be nothing more sublime.

From the second booth (erected by the Perth family, at the end of the Lake) Mr Farrington took his first view in the Trofachs, looking eastward through the dark ravine. He remarked, “that it resembled the views which are given of the Scenery of New South Wales.”

Passing westward from the booth, by the declivity, towards the middle of the expanse of water, Mr F. directing his eye to Benivenow on the south, delineated another most interesting prospect: Benivenow in near view, in the back-ground; the lower grounds, rich in pastures, and interspersed with trees; the mountain itself, sprinkled for two-thirds of its height with waving birches, and furrowed from the summit to the bottom with innumerable channels, formed by the water’s torrents, but at that time dry; with a fore-

ground of a beautiful sheet of water, of more than a mile in breadth, bounded by heaths, and rocks, and lofty mountains.

URISKS.

URISKS.

BENIVENOW is rendered venerable in the superstition of the natives, by the celebrated *Goirre nan Uriskin*, (the cave, or recess of goblins,) situated on the northern side of the mountain, and overhanging the Lake in gloomy grandeur. The *Urisks* were a sort of lubberly supernaturals, who, like the Brownies of England, could be gained over by kind attentions, to perform the drudgery of the farm ; and it was believed that many families in the Highlands had one of the order attached to it. They were supposed to be dispersed over the Highlands, each in his own wild recess ; but the solemn stated meetings of the order were regularly held in this cave of Benivenow. This current superstition, no doubt, alludes to some circumstance in the ancient history of this country ; perhaps it may have taken its rise, like the superstition of
the

the *Daoine Shi'*, or, *Men of peace*, from the abolition and proscription of the Druidical order, under the Fingallian Dynaſty.

Bealach-nam-bó, or, the paſs of cattle, is ſomewhat higher up in the mountain, overhung with luxuriant birches. “There “is not,” ſaid a friend of mine, an enthuſiaſtic admirer, and ſkilful delineator of ſcenery, who has been on the ſpot, “there is not ſuch a *Bealach* in the uni- “verſe, as *Bealach-nam-bó*.” Indeed, did the Traveller’s time and convenience permit, his toil would be well rewarded, ſhould he croſs the Lake to the Aberfoyle ſide, a little above the ſecond booth; or walk up from Auchray, along the river to the hay barn at *Murlagan*, to obtain a nearer view of the wonderful ſcenery of Benivenow. The fine diſpoſition of the woods, the ſtupendous overhanging rocks, the awful ſolemnity of *Coirre-nam-Urskin*, and the magnificence of *Bealach-nam-bó*, would amply gratify his taſte for the ſublime.

Paſſing

Passing on, by the road, you lose the Lake for a few minutes, only to enjoy it, opening with more grandeur, and presenting new and picturesque views of the mountain on the left. To enjoy this scenery in its full extent, the Traveller must pass on to the square rock, which projects its bluff head over the broadest part of the Lake, a mile below the farm houses of *Brenchyle*. There, the view to the south is truly magnificent. More than six miles of water are under the eye; four miles more of the Lake being lost, by a turn amongst the mountains to the right. The lofty mountains of *Ar-roquhar* bound the view to the west.

ETYMO

ETYMOLOGY.

REGARDING the Etymology of the most remarkable names of places mentioned on this occasion, let it suffice to say, that *Trosachs*, signifies, the *rough* or *bristled* grounds; or a scene *rough* and *bristled* with mountains, and rocks, and woods. *Benivenow*, signifies the *small* mountain, a denomination which it seems to have acquired from its relative size, compared with *Benlomond*, immediately on the S. W. and *Benledi*, on the N. E. *Binnan* is the still less mountain (*monticulus*.)

Loch *Ketturrin*, (so pronounced uniformly in Gaelic) appears to have derived its name, by an analogy common in the denomination of Highland scenes, from the rudeness of the adjacent objects: *Urrin*, or *Furrin*, is the hell of the Celts, (a corruption of *Ifrinu*, or *Ifreone**, the cold island

* See Diarmad, in Smith's Seandana, and the Doctor's note.

island of Fingal.) Many places in the Highlands, which the natives considered as peculiarly rude and uncomfortable, have, from this analogy, obtained a similar denomination, as *Lochurrin*, or the Loch of Hell, in Invernessshire; *Glenurrin*, or the Glen of Hell, in Cowal, in Argyleshire, &c. The Etymology of Loch *Ketturrin*, must be sought for in the same source, it is Hell's Loch; and it must here be remarked, that to such scenery as the *Trosachs* exhibit, the natives attribute no beauty. They consider such scenes as horrible; and however attached they may be to their native soil, they sigh after an exchange of such abodes, for the rich and level plains of the low-country. To enjoy these scenes, the culture of taste is requisite.

NATURAL

NATURAL HISTORY.

WITH regard to the Natural History of this ride, it may be observed, that the Glen of Leney furnishes a most fertile field for plants of the *Cryptogamia* class. In the wood of *Carquihinnè*, immediately on the south of the river, above Callander, the *Pyrola rotundifolia* grows abundantly. In Loch Venachar, Loch Auchray, and Loch Ketturrin, the *Lobelia Dortmanna* is found in plenty. On the northern bank of Loch Venachar, by the road side, half way between the farms of Milntown and Lendrick, the Author of this Sketch met, for the first time, with the *Hypericum Androsæmum**, one of the most beautiful of our British shrubs. Whilst the uncommon elegance of the
leaves

* This beautiful shrub is to be found also in a small island at the west end of Loch Ketturrin, near Stronchlachar; and at the cascade, above Ledard in Aberfoyle. It grows in the greatest abundance on the road side, from Arroquhar, along the backs of Lochlong.

Leaves and flower, recommend it for the shrubbery; the ambiguous quality of its berry, renders it unsafe to introduce it, where its tempting appearance might endanger the health of children. But how much more strongly does this objection lie against the introduction of the *Solanum Dulcamara*, (a native also of this district*,) which is to be found in several shrubberies, though its berry is well known to be the most fatal poison.

On Benledi, is to be found the *Arbutus Uva Ursi*; it is also said to grow on the lower skirts of Benivenow, above Auchray; but the Author cannot assert this from his own knowledge. In the Trofachs, the oak, alder, birch, hazle, mountain ash, (*sorbus aucuparia*), the ash, the hawthorn, and crab-tree, cover the rocks to the verge of the Lake. The Aspin, or *Populus tremula*, (the *Crithean* of the Celts,) so learnedly asserted by some

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to

* It is to be found native at the junction of the Keltie with the Forth, below Gartmore house.

to be no native of Scotland, but an importation from Italy; grows in every crevice of the rocks, and in great profusion on a promontory jutting into the Lake, called the *Priusan*. The *Vaccinium Myrtillus*, *Oxycoccus*, and *Vitis Idea*, occurs abundantly. On the western shoulder of Benivenow, the *Rubus chamaemorus*, above ground a Diæcious plant, but with the male and female, according to the observation of Dr Solander, united below the surface, grows in such plenty, that the berries are sometimes presented at table like strawberries. The Alpine strawberry too, is to be found in plenty along the road side, on Loch Ketturrin.

The rocks are almost entirely granite, intersected, from time to time, with veins of quartz.

The black eagle has built her eyrie from time immemorial, in the cliffs of Benivenow; but by the exertions of the tenantry, who suffered much loss from her depredations on their flocks, the race
is

is now almost extirpated. Kites and hawks are, at all times, seen hovering around the cliffs.

The roe is frequent in the skirts of Benivenow, and in the Trofachs. In hard winters, the red deer of the northern forests sometimes seek shelter here.

SEASON FOR VISITING THE TROS- ACHS.

THE road from Callander to the eastern end of Loch Ketturrin is good, and accessible to carriages of every kind. From the beginning of May to the beginning of November, this scenery is crowded with visitors of distinction, from every corner of the kingdom. It is no unfrequent thing to see here six or seven carriages in one day.

The most favourable season for visiting this, as well as all other Highland scenes, is the month of June, or of July, when the woods are in full foliage, and when all Nature smiles. But it may be allowed to remark, that there is no season when this scenery appears to more advantage than in the month of October, when the oak, the ash, the birch, and trembling poplar, exhibit the endlessly varying tints of green and brown, or red and yellow.

In

In visiting these interesting scenes, however, there is an inconvenience which has been always felt, and frequently complained of by travellers. To survey the Trosachs, either by the route of Callander or Aberfoyle, is the work of a whole day : It becomes necessary for the traveller to carry his provisions along with him ; and to snatch his hurried meal in one of the two booths erected at the east end of the lake, by the Perth family ; or, if the booths are pre-occupied, he must entertain himself in the best sheltered recess that he can find.

Attending to this essential circumstance, it has often occurred to the writer of this sketch, that it might well reward the trouble and expence of the Inn-keeper at Callander, or of the occupier of the farm of Brenchyle, (on which the northern part of this celebrated scenery lies,) to build a cottage, either at the eastern extremity of the lake, or on a small neck of land which runs into it, about a mile to the west. Two comfort-

able bed rooms, with a kitchen and an open shade (with some provisions) for horses, would be enough. There, from the first of May to the first of November, should a servant be kept, and a supply of provisions sent, from time to time, from the Inn at Callander or Aberfoyle. The luxury of such refreshments, to be obtained upon the spot by the exhausted traveller, after riding or walking more than a dozen miles, under a summer's sun, (with as many miles to return), can easily be conceived by those who are accustomed to such journeys.—The Author of this Sketch has often had occasion to feel a peculiar interest in this scheme of accommodation. It falls to his share, every Summer, to accompany some of his friends in visiting this delightful scenery. More than once has he had occasion to regret the want of such accommodations on the account of ladies, unaccustomed to such excursions; and who, after passing a whole day in admiring and studying the Trossachs, have not
found

found it possible to procure any refreshment or repose, until nine o'clock in the evening.

It may be observed, particularly, that draughtsmen, and amateurs in natural history, (for which this district offers so fine a field) would wish to pass some days on so favourable a spot, instead of seeking lodgings at Callander or Aberfoyle, the former distant more than ten miles, the latter more than five; by lodging at such a distance as Callander or Aberfoyle, the best part of the day is lost, before the draughtsman or the botanist can enter on the scene of his operations. Mr F. when he was leaving the Trofachs, emphatically remarked, "Here I could find studies for a month."

So far respecting the Trofachs, and the road that leads to them from the east and north.

II. BY

II. BY DRYMEN, GARTMORE, AND ABERFOYLE.

To the traveller from the south and west of Scotland, a nearer and very interesting route presents itself by Drymen, Gartmore, and Aberfoyle. From Glasgow to Drymen is seventeen miles and an half; and from Dumbarton to the same place, eleven. The road, in both these directions, is excellent.

The route from Glasgow presents many elegant seats. At some points of view, in the course of the Endrick, the eye commands Culcruich, the seat of Peter Speirs, Esq. near which, in the brow of the rock, may be seen a fine specimen of basaltic columns, detached from the rock, perfectly hexagonal, and more than twenty feet high. Ballikinren, the seat of Mr Napier, and the flourishing village of Balfron, are occasionally in view.

On

On the right, the romantic glen of Croy, the seat of Professor Richardson of Glasgow College, with its ornamented environs, and a cascade of more than fifty feet, well deserve the attention of every traveller of taste.

BUCHA.

BUCHANAN, &c.

THE route from Dumbarton, again, offers to the eye the classic Leven, in its whole extent, with the interesting scenes of industry and of art, which enliven its well peopled banks. Various and beautiful views of Lochlomond open from time to time upon the left. Ross, the seat of Hector B. M'Donald, Esq. one of the principal clerks of Session, is situated on a delightful promontary, jutting out into the lake. As the traveller advances, Buchanan, the seat of his Grace the Duke of Montrose, comes in full view before the eye, on the left ; presenting a widely extended domain : a lawn of at least 1200 acres, beautifully sprinkled with aged trees, bears a nearer resemblance to an English park than any thing that is to be met with in Scotland. The mountain behind is finely skirted with thriving plantations, which are every year

year extended on the most ample scale. Catter, the residence of George Menzies Esq. with every object disposed in the justest taste, is passed immediately on the right: and the village of Drymen, where accommodations may be had for the passing traveller, appears on the slope of the hill, to the north.

From Drymen to Gartmore is seven miles, across the hill: The road is rough; but passable to carriages. It is about to undergo a thorough repair. From the brow of the hill, above Drymen, looking S. W. a most striking view of Lochlomond,—interspersed with islands which evidently form a part of the Grampian range, with its western shore finely clothed with woods, offers itself to the eye.

Nothing can be bleaker than the scene which presents itself at the summit of the hill; just when the beautiful vale in which the Endrick flows, is lost to the view on the south; and before the vale of Menteith opens on the north.—When

Mr

Mr Wilkes, and his friend Churchill, visited Scotland, about 1760, they proceeded thus far ; but, at this spot, horrified with the desart appearance of the scene, and apprehending that they had reached the utmost verge of Scottish cultivation, they turned their horses, and sought shelter for the night at Buchanan house. The Duke of Montrose was then in London ; but they were most hospitably entertained for three days, by his Grace's chamberlain, with Highland mutton and old claret ; of which they, not unwilling, liberally partook. The satirical poet, on reaching London, returned this hospitality, by writing his celebrated poem, intituled, " The Prophecy of Fa-
" mine ;" in which he introduces the scene of Drymen Muir with abundant effect ; but he has forgotten to record the copious fare of Buchanan house.

GART-

GARTMORE.

IN passing Gartmore house, the seat of Mr Cuninghame Graham, the curiosity of the traveller will be gratified, by spending an hour, in seeing a house, which, even in a country less rude than this, would be justly reckoned elegant. The drawing-room, both in its dimensions, and in its style of finishing, is perhaps the handsomest on the north of the Tweed. The Amateur in painting will be delighted to find here two cabinet pictures, of Morning and Evening, by *Claude Lorraine* ; a cattle piece, by *Berghem* ; a flight into Egypt, by *Rubens* ; a drunken egg merchant, by *Jean Stein* ; an attack of Banditti, by *Salvator* ; and tho' last and least in dimensions, not the least beautiful, a portrait of *Gerard Dow*, by himself. In the dining-room, there is a family portrait by *Hogarth*, of some of the relatives of

this house, in which the painter has introduced himself. Besides the family portraits, there is to be seen in the Library a portrait of the celebrated Lord Kames ; a fine one of the late Dr Dickson, Bishop of Downe and Connor, the friend of the present Minister for foreign affairs, and the only person on whom he had an opportunity of conferring a bishoprick, during his short administration, in his coalition with Lord North : In the same room is also a portrait of Professor Richardson, of Glasgow College, in an uncommon style of shading, by Raeburn.

ABER-

ABERFOYLE INN.

FROM Gartmore to Aberfoyle is three miles, by a good road : From Stirling to Aberfoyle is 20 miles ; there the Traveller meets with an excellent Inn, lately built by his Grace the Duke of Montrose, where comfortable beds, good stabling, and every other accommodation can be had. From the Inn to the opening of the Trossachs, is $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles over the hill ; but by Port and Callander 22 miles. The road over the hill does not admit carriages, but is tolerable for riders. Guides, or Horses, may be had, on a short notice, at the Inn.

About half a mile above the Inn, before reaching the summit of the hill, immediately on the right of the road, you pass a magnificent cascade of more than 100 feet high : it is called by the natives *Camiláder*, or the *Strong Arch* (of water.) To see it to advantage, you must approach

proach to the very bottom of the fall. In rainy weather, it is truly grand, and furnishes a fine subject for the pencil.

At the summit of the mountain, the scene becomes no less bleak than Drymen Muir. When the opposite valley, however, presenting a distant view of Callander, Loch Venachar, and Benledi begins to open, the prospect becomes every moment more interesting.

CRAIG.

CRAIG-VAD VIEW.

PERHAPS there is not to be found in the whole extent of the Highlands of Scotland, a more magnificent prospect than that which opens, when Loch Auchray and the Trosachs first come in to view.

Let the Traveller, just as he emerges from the narrow ravine through which the road lies ; and at the instant that he loses sight of Loch-drunkie, (a beautiful little lake, finely skirted with wood, which he now leaves to the east,) strike up through the heath, on the right, for a few paces, till he reaches the summit ; instead of the narrow horizon of a few hundred yards to which he had been confined, an immense expanse of landscape bursts at once upon the eye, extending at least 100 miles, from the mountains of *Glenurquhay* on the left, to the eastern extremity of the *Ochills*, on the right. E-

levated more than 1500 feet above the valley, he has in bird's-eye prospect before him, *Loch Ketturrin*, the whole range of the *Trosachs* from the summit of *Benivenow*, to the summit of *Binman*, *Loch Auchray*, the opening of *Glenfinglas*, *Benledi*, *Loch Venachar*, and *Callander*.

There can be nothing grander in nature; and whatever route the Traveller has taken, let him, before he is fatiated with the *Trosachs*, gratify himself with the *Craig-Vad* view*, (as it is called) of this scenery.

Descending from this height, you pass the river by a ford at *Auchray*; and after riding along the shore of that very beautiful lake, for about half a mile, plunge into the *Trosachs*, as before.

It may be noticed, that Mr F. a few hundred yards above *Auchray*, on the S. W. border of the lake, delineated a *general* view of the *Trosachs*, including the

* *Craig-Vad* is in Gaelic, *the rock of wolves*, an animal which is known to have existed, as well as the wild boar, in this country.

the whole extent of outline from the summit of *Benivenow*, to the summit of *Binman*, with the rocks, and woods, and winding river ; a scene which no description can equal, immediately under the eye.

ABER-

ABERFOYLE.

It may be remarked, that Aberfoyle, independent of the magnificence of the Trosachs, presents various other beauties of landscape, of no ordinary kind: and it was here that Mr F. intent on the object of his work, the delineation of the scenery of the Forth, took the most numerous and laboured views.

1. Taking a station on a small eminence above the ford in the river, called Alinan, and directing the eye westwards, you have the whole of this beautiful little valley, two miles in length, by about one in breadth, in full view. The *Forth*, called here by the natives the *Avendore*, or Black River, traverses the whole extent of the vale, which has the appearance of an amphitheatre, surrounded by mountains, covered half way up with luxuriant woods. On the north, especially, the valley is bounded by a mountain,

tain, which exhibits a tremendous precipice of more than 700 feet high ; and which seems to threaten destruction to the Traveller, as he passes along the road, immediately under the brow of the rock. From this precipice immense masses of rock tumble down from time to time with a noise like thunder ; and the path through which they have passed is marked out to the eye, like the deserted channel of a torrent. The lower part of the precipice is finely skirted with wood. Farther on, the woods and rocks are seen which overhang the first openings of Lochard. The back ground is formed by Benlomond, which on this side, exhibits an elegant conical shape.

The Forth has its source in a small stream that arises at a place called *Skianuir*, (or the ridge of yew trees,) about 10 miles westward, beyond Lochcon ; but it receives, about a mile above this station, a very important accession to its streams, from the water of *Duchray*, which has its rise very near the summit
of

of Benlomond; and which may seem to some to have an equal claim to the origin of the Forth.

The valley of Aberfoyle is enclosed on the east and south, by that celebrated range of mountains, called the *Grampians*, which traverse the whole breadth of Scotland, from south west, to north east. They have been traced in a direct line, from the Girdleness in Aberdeenshire, to the hill of Ardmure, on the Firth of Clyde. The distinctness with which this line of mountain preserves itself, amidst the intersections of others, running in different directions, argues some very extensive, yet uniform cause, to which this appearance is to be attributed.

In passing through this district, the internal conformation of these mountains is marked by very particular characters; a similar conformation has been traced in a line of more than 30 miles on each side; and it is probable that it extends through the whole.

The

The front which these mountains present to the S. E. is found uniformly to consist of *Breccia*, in which the rounded pebbles, which are imbedded in the cementing calcareous substance, are of various sizes, from a half inch, to eight or nine inches in diameter. These pebbles are of great weight, and of flinty hardness: they are of an elliptical form; and what is singular, they appear all to be penetrated through a great part of their substance with slight fissures, which are uniformly in a direction parallel to the shorter axis, and by which they break when violence is used. Does not this seem to indicate some other origin of these pebbles than friction against one another, by the action of water? Do they not exhibit the marks of cooling after fusion?

These immense masses of *Breccia* present sometimes a perpendicular precipice, and sometimes a rounded projection, both generally destitute of vegetation. To this, however, there is one beautiful exception

ception, in a round hill, on the eastern extremity of the vale of Aberfoyle, of the finest proportions ; rising to the height of 500 feet, and covered to the fummit with a thick wood of oak and birch.

From the fummit of this beautiful little hill, a most interesting view presents itself : Looking eastward, you have the windings of the Forth, deep skirted with woods, in bird's-eye prospect ; the lake of Menteith ; Rednock house, the seat of General Graham Stirling ; Cardross, the seat of Mr Erskine ; the great moss, with Stirling Castle, and the Ochills, in the back ground ; looking westward, the vale of Aberfoyle with the winding river ; the opening of Lochard, the great rock on the north, and in the back ground, Benlomond, surrounded by inferior hills.

In this same line of mountain, adjoining to these rocks, immediately on the west, masses of limestone are found from time to time ; not disposed in strata, with a regular dip, but in detached beds,
or

or *neſts*, as the workmen term it. The limestone is blue, with beautiful veins of white ; it is ſuſceptible of a fine poliſh, and has been made into chimney pieces, which approach the beauty of marble.

After a conſiderable interruption of vaſt maſſes of granite, extenſive ſtrata of fine blue ſlate are found to the weſtward, in this ſame line of hills.

E

LOCH-

LOCHARD.

ABOUT a mile to the westward of the Inn, Lochard opens to the view. A few hundred yards to the east of it, the Avendow, which had just issued from the lake, tumbles its waters over a rugged precipice of near 30 feet in height, forming in the rainy season, a very magnificent cascade.

2. The first opening of the lower lake, from the east, is uncommonly picturesque. Directing the eye nearly westward, Benlomond raises its pyramidal mass in the back ground. In nearer prospect, you have gentle eminences, covered with oak and birch to the very summit: the bare rock sometimes peeping through amongst the clumps. Immediately under the eye, the lower lake, stretching out from narrow beginnings, to a breadth of about half a mile, is seen in full prospect. On the right, the banks are skirted

skirted with extensive oak woods, which cover the mountain more than half way up.

This spot, in ancient times, formed the barrier between the low country, and the almost inaccessible tract that lies to the westward. It is called the *Pass of Aberfoyle* *. Previous to the formation of the road, which now stretches along the banks of the lake, a few men stationed in this pass, could have repulsed an army in attempting to advance further into the Highlands : In the time of the Commonwealth, a party of Cromwell's army, attempting to penetrate into the upper country, by this pass, were repulsed with considerable loss, by the natives, headed by the Earl of Glencairn, and Graham of Duchray, whose castle, situated about a mile to the southward, the invaders had just reduced to ashes.

E 2

Advan-

* These *Passes*, one of which has been mentioned already, were narrow openings, through the Grampian range, by which alone the higher part of the country could be approached.

Advancing to the westward, you lose the lake for about a mile. The upper lake, which is by far the most extensive, is separated from the lower, by a stream of about 200 yards in length. The most advantageous view of the upper lake, presents itself from a rising ground, near its lower extremity, where a foot path strikes off to the south, into the wood that overhangs this connecting stream.

UPPER

UPPER LOCHARD.

3. Looking westward, you have Benlomond in the back ground, rising at the distance of five miles, in the form of a regular cone, its sides presenting a gentle slope to the N. W. and S. E. On the right, you have the lofty mountains of Benoghrie, running west, towards the deep vale in which Lochcon lies concealed from the eye. In the foreground, Lochard stretches out to the west in fairest prospect; its length three miles, and its breadth a mile and a half. On the right, it is skirted with woods: the northern and western extremity of the lake is diversified with meadows, and corn fields, and farm houses. On the left, few marks of cultivation are to be seen: thick clumps of wood elegantly disposed, cover the eminences down to the water edge.

About a mile distant from the station of the spectator, a cluster of small Islands is seen, close upon the southern shore. They are merely barren rocks. On one of them are to be seen the ruins of an ancient edifice, said to have been built by Murdoch, Duke of Albany, uncle of James I. of Scotland. It is said, that he designed this, as a place of retreat when he apprehended a prosecution on account of his ambitious attempts ; for which, indeed, he was afterwards beheaded.

Here Mr F. added the following remark : “ A stranger must feel himself
 “ uncommonly struck, on meeting, at
 “ the very back of Benlomond, in a
 “ spot so sequestered as to be almost
 “ unknown to the world, a scene like
 “ the present : an extensive sheet of
 “ water, skirted with woods and cultivated fields, and accompanied with
 “ every object essential to picturesque
 “ beauty : the whole grouped and diversified in a style of harmony which
 “ may

“ may be thought by some to rival the
 “ scenes presented by the Cumberland
 “ lakes.”

Leaving this station, the traveller passes along the verge of the lake, under a ledge of perpendicular rock, from 30 to 50 feet high. Should he cross the lake here, and place himself on the opposite side, he may, in a calm day, have an echo from this rock, which repeats 14 syllables. In the crevices of this rock, and especially on the summit, may be found an immense profusion of the *Crithean*, or *populus tremula*. Here pike have been caught of 36 lb. weight. The extensive patches of the *Nymphaea alba*, which adorn the banks of Lochard, cannot fail to engage the attention of the botanist, and to please the eye of taste. The *Lobelia*, no where to be found to the east or south of the Grampians, not even in the lake of Menteith, which washes their base, is here abundant.

Immediately above the farm house of Ledard, and near the west end of the
 lake,

lake, is to be seen a cascade, which the Traveller will do well to visit. The stream, which is considerable, falls in one sheet, over a height of 10 or 12 feet, into a beautiful basin, formed of the solid rock; and so transparent, that, at the depth of ten feet, the smallest pebble may be seen: From this basin, dashing over a ledge of rock, it precipitates itself again, over an irregular slope of more than 50 feet, finely skirted with wood. On the edge of the above basin, grow some plants of the *Hypericum Androsæmum*.

If the Traveller's curiosity leads him to extend his excursion beyond Lochard, he will probably think his toil well rewarded by the prospect of Lochcon, which opens about two miles to the west. It is a very romantic lake: its length more than two miles, its breadth about one. It is bounded on the south by a precipitous mountain, finely sprinkled towards the west with aged birches; and on the north, with woods
of

of ash and oak. In a small island of this lake, a vast number of herons annually build their nests: they seem to have chosen this spot, both on account of its sequestered situation, and of the abundance of fish which this lake affords.

BEN.

BENLOMOND.

FROM the Aberfoyle station, the traveller from the east or north of Scotland, whose curiosity leads him to scale Benlomond, will find the nearest and easiest access to that mountain, which is no less interesting to the student in natural history, than to the admirer of the picturesque. The Author will now, therefore, take the liberty to reclaim the outlines, at least, of an account of this celebrated mountain, which he had written many years ago for the use of a friend.

Benlomond, in Stirlingshire, is 3,240 feet in height above the surface of the lake, and 3,262 above the level of the sea. In loftiness, indeed, it is surpassed considerably by Benevis, Bengloe, Benlawers, and others; but perhaps this difference in height will appear to the intelligent traveller to be more than compensated by the elegance of its insulated situation,

tuation, (if the expression may be allowed) with respect to the neighbouring mountains.

From different points of view, Benlomond presents different aspects. In travelling along the shores of Lochlomond, either on the eastern or western side, but especially on the latter, the mountain exhibits generally the appearance of a huge truncated cone, with one shoulder projecting somewhat out of that fair proportion, towards the south-east.

But the point of view in which Benlomond undoubtedly appears to the greatest advantage is from the north-east. In travelling from Stirling westward, by Aberfoyle, this mountain uniformly bounds the landscape in the form of a pyramid, with equally proportioned sides, and unmutilated by the interference of any of the adjacent hills.

In the months of July, August, and September, the summit of Benlomond is frequently visited by strangers, from every quarter of the Island, as well as by foreigners

reigners, whose curiosity leads them to travel in the Highlands. It may be proper to remark, that the latter of these months is perhaps of all others the most favourable for such an excursion, as at that time, on account of the cool temperature of the atmosphere, the air is less charged with vapours, than during the intense heats of summer.

In visiting Benlomond from Aberfoyle, the distance from the base being nine miles, the traveller, about a mile beyond the upper end of Lochard, strikes off to the left, and having crossed a small hill, enters into Glendow. He begins his ascent at the farm house of Comar, at the farthest extremity of the glen. The ascent is steep and rugged, but it is short ; and having advanced for the most part through a deep and narrow ravine, the traveller finds himself suddenly on the summit, emerging, as it were, from the hollow bottom of a large crater.

When arrived at the top, he is presented with a scene, which few in Britain

tain can pretend to rival. At the bottom of the mountain, one of the finest lakes in Europe is seen, through its whole extent of about twenty four miles; stretching out from small beginnings, to a breadth, towards its southern extremity, of about six miles; its surface beautifully diversified with islands, and its shores skirted with woods, and houses, and cultivated grounds.

In the range of the horizon, from the east by the south, to the south-west, the eye is successively presented with the rich plains of Stirlingshire and the Lothians; the heights of Lanarkshire; the vales of Renfrewshire; the coast of Ireland; Kintyre, and the Western Ocean.

But the circumstance which will perhaps appear most striking to the stranger, is the idea which he will now, for the first time, be enabled to form of the great outline of the Highlands of Scotland; for which no station is better adapted than Benlomond, where the prospect is unencumbered by the interference of any other hills.

From the east, where the Ochills have their commencement, directing the eye westwards, by the north, through a space of more than half the circle of the horizon, you are presented with a vast amphitheatre, bounded every where by lofty mountains, whose shades gradually melt away from the sight, and blend themselves at length with the blue colours of the sky. In this stupendous scene, the traveller will recognize Benlawers, Benvorlich, and Benledi, on the north west. Benmore on the north ; the Paps of Jura, and Goatfield in Arran, on the south west. His eye will be relieved from time to time, by dwelling on the beautiful lakes of Perthshire, some of which seem so near as to be seen in bird's-eye prospect.

The mountain itself affords, besides, a great variety of scenery. To the south east it stretches out into a slope of very gentle declivity. The north side is awfully abrupt ; it presents a concave precipice of many hundred yards in depth. He
must

must possess firm nerves, who can approach the brink, and look down unmoved. When you descend into this concavity, by the ravine already mentioned, it appears to form a semicircular basin of vast extent. A gun fired in this concavity, returns a long and variously reverberated echo ; though from the rareness of the atmosphere, on the summit, the report of a gun is there extremely faint.

In the variable weather of July and August, the Traveller has sometimes the awful enjoyment, of sitting in a serene atmosphere on the summit of the mountain, whilst the thunder cloud rolls below, and the livid lightening flashes between him and the surface of the lake. Caught in this situation, let not the prudent Traveller linger long upon the summit ; but retire as fast as he can from a spot where the variations of the weather are sudden, and the war of the elements far more formidable than on the plain.

To the natural historian, Benlomond is highly interesting. No minerals, indeed of any rarity or value have been discovered there. The rock consists, for the most part of Granite, interspersed with masses of Quartz. On the western side there is abundance of waving Schistus.

The Ptarmigan is found in the higher regions. Whether from stupidity of nature, or from being seldom disturbed by the intrusions of man, the Ptarmigan fears not his approach, but sits still, till you are almost close upon it.

Few mountains present a more fertile field to the Botanist. After he has got within half a mile of the summit, the habit of the vegetables is altogether different from what he had observed in the lower regions. When the young Botanist ascends Benlomond for the first time, he will be struck with the sudden transition by which he is carried, in the space of a few minutes, from the vulgar inha-

inhabitants of the plain, to the elegant Alpine regions. There every thing is changed: besides the plants that are peculiar to the Alpine heights, he will find the vegetables which abound below so altered in their appearance as to form new species. The *Epilobium*, the *Alchemilla*, the *Saxifrages*, the *Corastium*, have now assumed a new habit; and are no longer his common acquaintance of the plain. Add to these the native plants of the mountains; large patches of the elegant green, variegated with the bright red flower of the *Silene acaulis*: the *Sibbaldia procumbens*, with its tridentated leaves, growing profusely on the very summit: the *Rhodiola rosea*, in the brow of every rock; the *Azalea procumbens*, the minutest of woody plants, sparingly scattered on the south east shoulder; the *Trientalis*, in the woods that hang over the lake below; the *Statice*, abundant on the south east shoulder; the *Rubus Chamæ-morus*, (whose not unfragrant fruit is ripe

in July,) in plenty, about half way up the mountain.

This account of Benlomond may be concluded by remarking, that the partisans of the volcanic system may be disposed to adduce the form and appearance of this mountain in confirmation of their theory. Its conical shape will naturally strike the traveller as the probable effect of subterraneous fire. And, though there is now no appearance of a crater at the top, it may be observed, that the mountain, in its present state, seems evidently, by some convulsion of nature, to have suffered a defalcation of near one half of the original substance of its summit : that the northern side of the mountain, seems, at some period to have tumbled down ; and to have formed those shapeless masses, which we still observe towards that quarter.

When it is recollected, however, as was observed on a former occasion, that
all

all the great mountains present a similar appearance; the theory of Mr Kirwan, already alluded to, may seem to account sufficiently for the phænomena of Ben-lomond.

LAKE

LAKE OF MENTEITH.

BEFORE the Traveller quits this vicinity, let him visit the lake of Menteith, situated in the parish of Port, about three miles to the east of the Aberfoyle Inn, by an excellent road.

About a mile eastward from the Inn, at Donnans, there occurs again a beautiful *lusus naturæ*, similar to that of the Roman camp at Callander, but far less regular: extensive ridges, from three to nine or ten feet in height, shoot out in various directions, with a considerable degree of resemblance to a Roman encampment. One might fancy that one could trace, here, the stations of the outposts, and the circumvallations of the *prætorium*. But the whole is unquestionably to be ascribed to the workings of the Forth, seeking its way to the lake of Menteith, before it had obtained its present channel by Gartmore.

When

When the lake first opens to the view, on the east, it exhibits a beautiful expanse of water, about five miles in circumference, and nearly of a circular form.

The northern shore of the lake is adorned with some stately Oaks and Plane trees of ancient growth. The Manse and the Church, on the verge of the water, present interesting objects ; to the east, at some distance, is situated Rednock house, the seat of General Graham Stirling ; and to the south, Cardross, the seat of Mr Erskine ; two gentlemen, who, by their spirited improvements, and extensive scale of agricultural enterprize, have, in a few years, given a new aspect to this district of country.

The Lake of Menteith is adorned with three Islands, one of which is very small ; the other two appear in a very superior style of picturesque beauty ; they are covered with lofty trees, and rendered interesting by the ruins of ancient buildings.

The

The largest Island is called Inchmahoma. It consists of five acres of ground, one half of which was church lands ; the other half was occupied as a garden, by the Earls of Menteith. In this Island are still to be seen the ruins of an ancient priory, founded by David I. of Scotland. There is still standing a great part of the walls, with one arch to the north, in the most elegant style of Gothic architecture : another has tumbled down only within these thirty years. The great door, towards the west, which is still entire affords a fine specimen of the Gothic. It is, as far as recollection serves, exactly the same with the fine west door of the Abbey Church at Paisley.

The whole Island is the property of the Duke of Montrose ; the one half accruing to him with the estate of Menteith ; the other, by purchase, from the family of Cardross, who had obtained the church lands ; Mr Erskine of Cardross still retains the *Dominium* of the lake.

There

There are several large trees on this Island. Some *Spanish-chesnuts* measure about seventeen feet in circumference, six feet from the ground.

In the smaller Island on the left, stood the dwelling house of the Earls of Menteith, occupying the whole surface. In the turbulent periods of former ages, families of distinction in the Highlands, studied to have their residence in Islands, for the sake of security against the sudden attacks of their rival neighbours. They could, on any emergency, command the navigation of these lakes, by collecting all the boats into the Islands.

ANIMALS

ANIMALS AND PLANTS OF THIS DISTRICT.

The Osprey, or water Eagle, builds her nest in some of the lofty trees in Inchmahoma. The lake of Menteith, Lochard, and Lochcon, abound in Pike and Trout: the latter are, in all these lakes, of the same quality with the famous Lochleven Trout. The Lake of Menteith, besides, abounds in Perches of a large size. In winter, these lakes are covered with water fowls, some of them the rarer kinds of *Colymbi*.

The Ptarmigan (*Tetrao Lagopus*, Linn.) is generally to be found in the higher regions of the mountains. Black and red game, and partridges abound. The native quadrupeds are roes, hares, foxes, badgers, martins, pole-cats, wild-cats, weezels, otters, &c.

In the glen of Glenney, above the Lake of Menteith, the herb *Paris* grows in abundance.

bundance. On the borders of the Island Inchmahoma, is found the *Litorella*; on the other Island, the *Lysimachia vulgaris*, (by no means a common plant in this district) occurs. In rowing from Port to Inchmahoma, where the lake is so shallow that the bottom may be seen, the *Polygonum aquaticum* makes a fine appearance; its scarlet flower just appearing on the surface, and its broad leaved stem, shooting up through nine or ten feet of water, and giving interest to the deep. At the bottom, in this, as in most of the Highland lakes, the *Isoetes lacustris* may be found. The *Scirpus palustris* also abounds.

In the Minister's Glebe, at Aberfoyle, may be found that elegant plant, the *Trientalis Europea*, the *Adoxa*, the *Nymphaea lutea* and *alba*, *Schænus albus*, various kinds of the *Potamogetons*, *Vacciniums*, and *Ericas*. The *Trollius Europeus* abounds on the banks of the Forth: the *Sison inundatum*, is found in the river.

The *Chelidonium*, and *Lythrum salicaria* are to be found in Inchmahoma. The *Agrimonia*, *Comarum*, *Clinopodium*, *Gnaphalium dioicum*, *Empetrum*, *Myrica*, *Asplenium*, *Lycopodium*, and other uncommon plants, grow abundantly in this district.

On the banks of Lochard, and especially on the river that joins Lochcon and Lochard, the *Osmunda Regalis*, a plant of the most elegant appearance, grows in vast profusion. In Duke Murdoch's Island, as it is called, the *Pyrola longifolia* has been found. The *Drosera rotundifolia* occurs in all the mosses; in the moss below Gartmore-house, the *Drosera longifolia* abounds, intermingled with that most elegant plant, the *Andromeda polifolia*.

Under the farm houses of Culigartan, on the south-side of Lochard, the *Vaccinium uliginosum* occurs in plenty. The berry is not so finely flavoured as that of the *V. Myrtillus*. The *Solidago Virgaurea*, grows in the upper parts of Callander and Aberfoyle in a profusion,
that

that furprifes the ftudent of the botanic garden. The *Circæa lutetiana* is abundant. The *Orobis tuberosus*, the *Cormeil* of the Highlanders, which they confider as a pectoral, and ftrengtheners of the ftomach, is frequent; it is to be found in plenty about the cascade at Ledard.

SOIL AND CLIMATE OF THIS DISTRICT, WITH SOME METEOROLOGICAL REMARKS.

The soil, having been formed, for the most part, by the sediment carried down by the running waters, and deposited in the plain, is light and sharp; and it is generally observed that the harvest is earlier in the vales of Callander and Aberfoyle, than in the immediate neighbourhood to the east and south.

The climate, though rainy, on account of the vicinity of the mountains, is extremely healthy. Instances of longevity are frequent. The grave-digger at Aberfoyle, died lately in his 102d year, and was able to do his duty till within two years of his death. Several persons in this neighbourhood have lately reached the age of 90, and even of 97.

On account of the precariousness of the climate, the natives of this district have

have, from necessity, become adepts in prefiguring the changes of the weather. *Benlomond* is their barometer: the different phases which the mountain assumes, are reckoned certain indications of rain or drought. When, from the prevalence of dry vapours in the atmosphere, the outlines of the mountain, and of its scenery, are seen faintly, and as at a great distance, fair weather is portended. When, again, the atmosphere appears highly transparent, and *Benlomond* is seen, magnified in its dimensions, and the objects on its surface approximated beyond their just limits, rain is expected with certainty within 24 hours.

Dr Darwin, in his elegant and philosophical poem, the *Botanic Garden*, (Part I. Canto III. V. 20.) in a note, ascribes this greater or lesser transparency of the atmosphere, which causes objects at a distance to be seen more or less approximated to the eye, “to combinations and
 “decompositions of the vapour depo-
 G 3 “fited.

“ fitted in it ;” and adds, “ that this
“ wants investigation.”

Is it not, it may be asked with the utmost deference to natural philosophers, that the atmosphere, immediately before rain, being completely saturated with the aqueous solution, possesses a magnifying power ; and, acting as a lens, approximates the objects that are seen through it to the eye ; while, on the other hand, from a deficiency of aqueous vapour, in the dry state of the atmosphere, its magnifying power is diminished ; and the objects are seen with less distinctness ?

Before we quit this part of the subject, it may be permitted to take notice of a singular phænomenon, remarked by Mr Gilpin, in his book concerning the picturesque scenery of Cumberland *. He mentions the dappled appearance which
is

* The Book not being now at hand, the title may not be accurately given ; but it is well known to the public.

is sometimes assumed by the surfaces of the lakes, immediately previous to the approach of rains and storms: Circular or elliptical spots appear here and there, of a dark blue, and unruffled by the breeze, whilst the rest of the lake appears gray, and is gently agitated. This phenomenon Mr Gilpin himself had never an opportunity of observing; but he gives both the description, and the account of it, by the assistance of a philosophical friend.

This phenomenon is ascribed, with much appearance of probability, to the condition of the superincumbent atmosphere, which, immediately previous to a storm, is in different states of rarefaction, at different places; this circumstance seems also to be the cause of those little aerial eddies, and inequalities of the breezes which are observed at land, immediately before a storm. In this state of the atmosphere, the adjacent columns of air are, so to speak, heterogeneous: they have not yet attained
their

their equilibrium. The eddy of wind which ruffles the surface subjacent to one column, has no influence on the surface of water in its immediate neighbourhood, which corresponds to a column of air of different density and motion. By and by the storm thickens; the mass of air becomes more completely blended: the whole atmosphere becomes homogeneous, and the surface of the lake assumes an uniform appearance throughout.

There is another phænomenon, nearly allied to the above, and probably to be accounted for on the same principles, which is also frequently observed on the great lakes of the Highlands of Scotland; but of which, it is likely that neither Mr Gilpin, nor his philosophical friend had any knowledge. Sometimes, previous to heavy rains and storms, there is observed, on the surface of the lake, a broad belt of dark blue; it appears to be unruffled by the breeze, at the same time that the rest of the lake is agitated,
and

and of a greyish colour : it is bounded by straight lines of mathematical exactness ; and always extends across the whole lake. As the storm, however, advances, this blue zone gradually disappears, till at length, it vanishes entirely, and the surface of the water becomes uniform.

Were this appearance limited to the same place, and observed always in the same direction, it might be accounted for, as it actually is, by the vulgar, from the nature of the bottom, or from the depth of the water at the particular spot. But it is certain that this appearance changes its situation, and that it is seen, in different circumstances of the weather in every possible direction.

It appears probable, that this phenomenon is occasioned by a recent change in the direction of the currents of air, which is observed to take place, immediately previous to heavy rains. During the fair weather, before the storm, the wind generally blows from the north,
or

or north east. On the approach of foul weather, the south west wind, (in this climate the harbinger of rain,) commences ; and the wind, from the opposite point, though it still blows, is gradually dying away. In the mean time, at the line where the contending currents encounter, a longitudinal column of air is formed, neither totally exempted from, nor totally subjected to the influence of either ; and it may also be observed, that this column is rendered more dense by compression, than the mass of air on each side of it. This column is, in a great measure, therefore, in a state of rest ; and is marked out by the subjacent zone of water, which, being with more difficulty, put in motion, continues long to retain its tranquillity, and its azure hue. At length, however, the south-west wind obtains the undisputed ascendancy : the column of air which had hitherto resisted its influence, is blended with the common mass ; and the corresponding surface of the lake shares its fate.

fate. The different directions in which this belt is observed, it will naturally occur, must depend on the different directions of the contending currents of the atmosphere.

MANNERS,

MANNERS, CHARACTER, &c. OF THE PEOPLE.

Having offered the preceding sketches of the scenery, and natural history of this very interesting district, it may now be permitted to present a few traits of the distinguishing manners, and character of the inhabitants.

The territory on the north and west of the Grampian range, where the scenery that has been described principally lies, is not more distinguished from the low country by its external appearance and productions, than the inhabitants of each formerly were, and still, in some measure, are, by their language, character, and manners. But these distinctions are fast wearing away; and the character of the Highlander is rapidly assimilating itself to that of his neighbours on the south and east; the introduction of arts and industry, and especially

especially the general diffusion of knowledge, have, of late, produced a great change in the habits of the natives of this district : and as it is probable that in a few years, that which is now matter of observation, will depend only on record, or vague tradition ; it seems the more necessary, on this occasion, to delineate some of the leading features in the picture, whilst it is yet in our power to trace them.

LANGUAGE AND DRESS.

THE language chiefly spoken in this district is the *Gaelic*, or a dialect of the ancient *Celtic* ; a language which, though now confined to a few of the most remote and inaccessible corners of Europe, appears to have prevailed in former times from the pillars of *Hercules*, to the utmost *Thule*. In the ages and countries where this language prevailed, abstract speculations were, indeed, little exercised. But the simple feelings of an unrefined mind ; and above all, the aspect of external nature,—the objects which present themselves to the eye and to the ear, had their expressive and appropriate denominations : so that there is perhaps no language so well calculated to express external appearance and scenery as the Gaelic. Of this the mere English reader may be in some degree satisfied, even from the translation of Ossians' Poems, far short as it is
of

of the original. The scenery described in these poems is, indeed, limited ; but how wonderfully varied is the description itself. It must occur to the lover of antiquities as a subject of regret, that this ancient language is now hastening towards extinction, in every country where it had been spoken. The Cornish is now for ever lost ; the Welsh and Gaelic are now banished far beyond their ancient limits ; and by frequent commerce with the Low Country, giving way, with hasty steps, to the language of the rest of the Island.

The bulk of the Highlanders now understand English ; and by many, both languages are spoken with equal facility. It is true, that from the intermixture of Idioms, the dialect in either of them becomes corrupt ; but perhaps, what is lost in elegance of expression, is gained in acuteness of thinking. The Highlander, thus possessed of two languages, is naturally led to compare modes of expression, to trace analogies in grammar, and

to increafe his flock of ideas, in a manner which might feem the effect of an acquaintance with the general principles of language, derived from a liberal education.

The ancient Highland drefs is very generally worn: the people have ftill a very ftiong attachment to the habit of their forefathers; it was with extreme impatience that they bore the degrading prohibition of its ufe, which had been impofed by the legiflature: and they naturally confider the boon of its removal, as enhanced by its having been obtained by the interference of a chieftain of their own race*.

* The prefent Duke of Montrofe

GENERAL

GENERAL CHARACTER.

WITH regard to the general character of the Highlanders, as we find it exhibited here, as well as in the remoter districts of the country, it may be remarked, that they are a grave and intelligent people ; of a turn of mind peculiarly inquisitive, and susceptible of improvement from education. This spirit of curiosity for which the Highlander is remarkable, and the consequent information which he is generally found to possess, with regard to distant places and events, may be partly, at least, attributed to that expansion of mind which he naturally acquires from a rambling and excursive mode of life. While the farmer or labourer in the Low Country, is apt to have his mind shackled, and his faculties narrowed, by the habit of circumscribing his whole views, and hopes, and fears, to the scanty spot which he occu-

H 3 pies ;

pies ; the Highlander is generally employed in traversing vast tracts of country, where he has daily opportunities of contemplating nature upon the most extensive scale.

To the same circumstance, it would seem, we are to attribute another feature which has been remarked in this race of men. Without any appearance of unhappiness, their minds appear to be generally tinged with a slight dash of melancholy ; which however is far from being of the morose kind, or such as produces any thing like misanthropy. The melancholy of the Highlander seems rather to be a habit of mind produced by the combined effects of sensibility, solitude, and the habitual contemplation of wild and sublime scenery. Little employed in cultivating the ground, his mind is not fettered by a minute attention to a single spot ; the range of his excursions is wide, but it is lonely. In tending his flocks, he scales the lofty mountain, and traverses the extensive
moor

moor, or dusky forest. In the perambulations of a whole day, he may not have an opportunity of seeing “ the human face divine ;” or if he meets with a brother shepherd, the subject of their talk, in their short interview, is generally formed of the disasters of the day ; the presages of the weather ; a dream of horror ; or an adventure with a ghost.

Besides it may be observed, that the prospect which perpetually engages the eye of the Highlander, of barren heaths, lofty mountains, rugged precipices, and wide stretched lakes, has a natural tendency to call forth sentiments of sublimity, which are unfavourable to frivolousness of thought. The Highlander is led from time to time, to contemplate the grandest objects of nature : the war of the elements ; the impetuous torrent, sweeping every thing before it ; the thunder of heaven, reverberating in repeated peals among the mountains ; the violence of winds, rendered furious by being pent up in a deep and narrow valley ;

valley ; and snow coiled up in heaps, that interrupt for weeks the intercourse of a whole district. All these are circumstances, which are well calculated to fix down the mind to habits of sober thinking ; and to impress with serious meditation on the vicissitudes of human affairs.

Notwithstanding this general character of what may be styled pensive susceptibility, which belongs to the Highlander, he is in the highest degree alive to joyous feelings. The Highlanders are fond of music, and of dancing, with diversions of all kinds. In ancient times, when the hospitality of the chieftain furnished subsistence to his numerous dependants, it is in the memory of persons still alive, and still more particularly, in the tradition of the generation last passed, that the whole occupation of the long winter nights was to listen to the recitation of the poetry of Ullin, of Ossian, of Carril, &c. The Clanronald family, it is well known, had their bards, thus regularly appointed and employed,

employed, till within little more than half a century past ; and even private individuals piqued themselves, till within these very few years, on reciting considerable portions of this ancient Poetry. Robert Macniel, an old man still living, in this district, can yet recite the long poem which records the invasion of Manos, King of Lochlin ; and his repulse by Fingal. S. MacLachlane, still living here, can recite the Poem called *Bas Fhraoich*, which was translated by Jerome Stone, almost word for word as it is given by Henry Mackenzie, Esq. in the Report on the Poems of Ossian.

The Music of the Highlanders is congenial with their general habits and character. It is, for the most part, not only plaintive, but even melancholy. *Laments*, as they are called, or funeral dirges, constitute a very important, and favourite branch of Highland music. There are some exquisite airs, chiefly in this style of melancholy ; and perhaps there are few who will not admit the Pathos of

“ *Mac*

" *MacGregor a Ruaro*;" " *Curr a chean dilis*," and others, which could be easily mentioned. The Bag-pipe, to which the Highlander feels an almost instinctive attachment, is well calculated for this style of melody : The great Bag-pipe, when played on in the fields, produces a fine effect, in a still evening, by the reverberation of the tones from the mountains and glens.

The Highlanders, like every other people in the early stages of society, are remarkable for their hospitality : from their eagerness to be informed, as well as to entertain, there are none who rejoice more heartily at the approach of a stranger.

The Highlander, at home, is indolent. It is with impatience, that he abstracts, from his favourite occupation of traversing the mountains and moors, in looking after his flocks, a few days in Spring and Autumn, for the purposes of his narrow scheme of agriculture. It is remarked, however, that the Highlander, when removed

moved beyond his native bounds, is found capable of abundant exertion and industry.

The Highlanders are naturally a brave and generous people, and impatient of being outdone by others, in any attempt. They are able to endure fatigue, and hunger, and thirst, and heat, and cold, beyond what is credible by those who have been accustomed to the softer modes of life. They are the best foldiers in the world. From them, it is well known, our armies have, for more than half a century, received their choicest supplies ; and it will not be denied, that their valour has had a distinguished share, in raising some of the most illustrious trophies, that grace the military annals of Britain.

PECU-

PECULIAR AND LOCAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

WHILST the inhabitants of the district, which it has now been attempted to describe, are affected, in common with the other natives of the Highlands, by the circumstances which have been mentioned ; it must, at the same time, be observed, that some accidental and local circumstances, peculiar to themselves, have had some effect in discriminating them from their neighbours.

In former times, those parts of this district, which are situated beyond the Grampian range, were rendered almost inaccessible, by strong barriers of rocks and mountains and lakes. It was a *border* country ; and though on the very verge of the Low Country, it was almost totally sequestered from the world, and, as it were, insulated with respect to Society.

It

It is well known, that in the Highlands, it was, in former times, accounted not only lawful, but honourable, among hostile tribes, to commit depredations on one another : and these habits of the age were perhaps strengthened in this district, by the circumstances which have been mentioned. It bordered on a country, the inhabitants of which, while they were richer, were less warlike than they, and widely differenced by language and manners.

The district of country which has been described, appears, however, to have enjoyed a considerable degree of tranquillity, till about the year 1746. About that time, it became infested with a lawless band of depredators, whose fortunes had been rendered desperate by the event of 1745, and whose habits had become incompatible with a life of sobriety and honesty. These Banditti consisted chiefly of emigrants from Lochaber, and the remoter parts of the Highlands.

They seem to have made choice of this district for their principal resort ; both on account of the easy access which it afforded to the Low Country, and of the secure retreat with which it furnished them on their return. In the strongholds above the Passes of this district, they led a rambling and licentious life. In convenient spots, they erected temporary huts, where they met, from time to time, and regaled themselves at the expence of the peaceable and defenceless inhabitants. The ruins of these huts are still to be seen in the woods. They laid the country under contribution : and whenever any individual was so unfortunate as to incur their resentment, he might lay his account with having his cattle carried off before morning ; and was obliged to redeem them at whatever price the plunderers were pleased to stipulate.

The exertions of the inhabitants, aided by the military stationed at Inverfnaid, was found insufficient to exterminate
this

this band of villains. This country owes the suppression of them, and its consequent tranquillity, to the wisdom and activity of an individual, the late Nicol Graham of Gartmore, Esq. He had been originally bred for the bar ; and to a skill in general jurisprudence, he joined a profound knowledge of the particular interests of the Highlands of Scotland. This was indeed a subject, to which he had turned his attention at an early period of life ; and the important hints which were suggested by him, “ concerning the Improvement and Civilization of the Highlands,” not only procured him the correspondence and friendship of the Minister Sir Robert Walpole ; but they were actually adopted in some measure, in the subsequent arrangements. By his exertions in co-operation with General Churchill, the Commander in Chief, in Scotland, and with the Law officers of the Crown, very effectual measures were taken to restore tranquillity to this district.

Mr Graham, from his intimate knowledge of the country, was enabled to trace the depredators through all their haunts : and he drove them, by degrees, from all their strongholds. The ring-leaders were apprehended : some of them were executed ; others were banished ; and some, who gave hopes of their leading a more inoffensive life for the future, were permitted to pass the remainder of their lives in peace *.

To these exertions of public spirited individuals, and above all, to the Act in 1748, by which the feudal jurisdiction was abolished, the present tranquillity and consequent prosperity of the Highlands, are doubtless, to be attributed. The great bond of union between the superior and his vassals is dissolved ; and they are no longer liable to be called
forth

* Within these few days, the Author saw a curious collection of papers, containing at large, *the particulars* here stated, in the Library at Gartmore. They are entitled *Thief-papers*.

forth, to minister to his avarice or revenge ; nor do they any longer depend on his bounty for their subsistence. The jurisdiction of the Chief over his Clan, is now superseded by the wholesome regulations of a more general police. Every individual now feels himself to stand alone, and is obliged, by honest industry, and subordination to the laws, to provide for his family, and to seek the protection of a regular government.

In consequence of these laws by which the Highlanders have been subjected to the same forms of police with the rest of the inhabitants of the Island, a change of manners has taken place amongst them, so rapid, and so considerable, as to be almost beyond the belief of those who have not had an opportunity of remarking the contrast. The inhabitants of this country are a peaceable and honest race of men ; and are generally capable of a considerable degree of industry, especially when they remove, as they are frequently obliged to do, by the enlarge-

ment of the sheep farms, into the manufacturing towns and villages. There is no country in Europe where persons and property are more secure from injury than in the Highlands. The people are courteous and hospitable. They are, in general, temperate ; though on occasions of public festivity, which occur but rarely in a country so thinly inhabited, they may sometimes exceed the bounds which sobriety prescribes.

SUPER.

SUPERSTITIONS OF THE HIGHLANDERS.

BEFORE quitting this scene, rendered important to the Naturalist, by the commencement of a new field of research; and to the Student of human nature, by an exhibition of character and manners, which is now peculiar to a very limited sphere of observation; it may be interesting to obtain some slight notices of the Superstitions of the Highlanders; in so far at least, as they are found current in the district which has been described.

The superstitious opinions of the ancient Highlanders seem to have borrowed their tone, in a great measure, from the nature of the country which they inhabited. Living, as they did, amongst dreary wastes, and rugged mountains; their progress from one place to another, impeded, frequently, by the rapid torrent

rent, or wide stretched lake ; often, in their journeys, sinking under the pressure of fatigue and hunger ; or borne down by the rigors of an inclement sky ; their imagination was naturally led to ascribe every disaster to the influence of superior powers, in whose character, the predominating feature necessarily was malignity towards the human race.

Every Lake had its *Kelpie*, or water horse, often seen by the Shepherd, as he sat in a summer's evening, upon the brow of a rock, dashing along the surface of the deep, or browsing on the pasture ground, on its verge *. Often did this malignant genius of the waters allure women and children to his subaqueous haunts, there to be immediately devoured. A most disastrous event of this kind is still current in tradition concerning the

* So far this opinion of the Highlanders, concerning the Kelpie, corresponds exactly with the accounts given by Bruce and Sparrman of the *Hippopotamus*, which certainly, however, never existed in this country.

the water-horse of Lochvenachar. Often did he also swell the torrent or lake, beyond its usual limits, to overwhelm the hapless traveller in the flood.

Of the *Ourisks* something has been said already. They were supposed, to be of a condition somewhat intermediate, between that of mortal men and spirits. They were generally inclined to mischief; but, by kind treatment, were often prevailed with to be very serviceable to the family which they haunted; and by which they were accordingly considered as an acquisition. Their grand rendezvous was in *Benivenow: Coirre nan Uriskin* merits the notice of the Traveller, besides, for its magnificent scenery.

DAOINE

DAOINE SHITH, OR SHI'.

BUT the most beautiful and perfect branch of Highland Mythology, which is, to this day retained, in some degree of purity, is that which relates to the *Daoine Shith*, or *Shi'*, (*men of peace*), or as they are sometimes styled, *Daoine matha* (*good men*) apparently, in order to propitiate their favour; on the same principle that the *Furies* were called *Eumenides* by the Greeks.

The Mythology of the *Daoine Shi'*; though generally considered as corresponding to that of the *Fairies* of England, and perhaps too of the Orientals; I cannot but regard as very different in many important particulars: These will be best understood and appreciated by a short deduction.

The *Daoine Shi'*, or *men of peace*, of the Highlanders, differ most essentially from the *Fairies* of Shakespeare, who indeed
pro-

produced the wonderful Mythology of "*The Midsummer's Night's Dream*," from his own most creative imagination.

Leaving it to others to institute the comparison, I shall satisfy myself with stating a few of the particulars of the Celtic superstition on this subject.

The *Daoine Shi*, or *men of peace*, of the Highlanders, though not absolutely malevolent, are believed to be a peevish repining race of beings, who, possessing themselves but a scanty portion of happiness, are supposed to envy mankind their more complete and substantial enjoyments. They are supposed to enjoy, in their subterraneous recesses, a sort of shadowy happiness ; a tinsel grandeur ; which however, they would willingly exchange for the more solid joys of mortals.

The *men of peace*, are believed to be always dressed in green ; and are supposed to take offence, when any of mortal race presume to wear their favourite colour.

colour *. The celebrated Viscount of Dundee, was dressed in green, when he commanded at the Battle of Killicrankie ; and to this circumstance the Highlanders ascribed the disastrous event of that day. It is still accounted peculiarly ominous to any person of *his name*, to assume this sacred colour.

They are believed to inhabit certain round grassy eminences, where they celebrate their nocturnal festivities by the light of the moon. About a mile beyond the source of the Forth, above *Lochcon*, there is a place called *Coir-shi'an*, or the *Cove of the men of peace*, which is still supposed to be a favourite place of their residence. In the neighbourhood, are to be seen many round, conical eminences ;

* Green was probably the appropriate dress of the Druidical Order. In the poem of Conn, the son of Dargo, (who is styled the *Druid of Bel*), published by Dr Smith, in his *Seandana*, we read, that in the Battle with the Fingallians, which, according to tradition, finally decided the fortunes of the Druidical Order, their Standard was *Green*.

nences ; particularly one, near the head of the Lake ; by the skirts of which, many are still afraid to pass after sun-set. It is believed, that if, on Hallow-eve *, any person alone, goes round one of these hills nine times, towards the left hand (*sinistrorsum*), a door shall open, by which he shall be admitted into their subterraneous abodes. Many, it is said, of mortal race, have been entertained in their secret recesses. There, they have been received into the most splendid apartments, and regaled with the most sumptuous banquets, and delicious wines. Their females surpass the daughters of men in beauty ; the *seemingly* happy inhabitants pass their time in festivity, and in dancing to notes of the softest music. But, unhappy is the mortal who

K

joins

* The *Samch-in*, or *fire of peace*, of the Highlanders ; a solemn season appointed for the administration of justice by the Druids, (the men of peace :) when they met the people on these round hills, or *Laws*; and the occasion was solemnized by kindling fires, and perhaps by offering sacrifices, on these eminences.

joins in their joys, or ventures to partake of their dainties By this indulgence, he forfeits for ever the society of men, and is bound down irrevocably, to the condition of a *Shi'ich*, or *man of peace*.

“ A woman,” as is reported in Highland tradition, “ was conveyed, in days
 “ of yore, into the secret recesses of the
 “ *men of peace*. There she was recog-
 “ nized by one who had formerly been
 “ an ordinary mortal ; but who had, by
 “ some fatality, become associated with
 “ the *Shi'ichs*. This acquaintance, still
 “ retaining some portion of human be-
 “ nevolence, warned her of her danger ;
 “ and counselled her as she valued her
 “ liberty, to abstain from eating or drink-
 “ ing with them, for a certain space of
 “ time. She complied with the counsel
 “ of her friend : and when the period
 “ assigned was elapsed, she found herself
 “ again upon earth, restored to the socie-
 “ ty of mortals. It is added, that when
 “ she examined the viands which had
 “ been presented to her, and which had
 “ appeared

“ appeared so tempting to the eye,-
 “ they were found, now that the en-
 “ chantment was removed, to consist on-
 “ ly of the refuse of the earth.”

DRUIDS.

BEFORE we proceed farther in this account of the still prevalent superstition of the *Daoine Shi'*, it may be observed, that it evidently appears to be founded on the history and fate of the Druidical Order, who formerly, in matters civil and ecclesiastical, held the supreme sway in Celtic Europe. That this hierarchy existed in Scotland, can be proved satisfactorily from other sources : but it is presumed, that to an inquiring mind, the still remaining traces of this superstition of the *Daoine Shi'*, or *men of peace*, will furnish the best evidence of their identity with the ancient *Druids*, as well as the best documents that can now be obtained, of the particular tenets of a system of worship, whose essence was secrecy ; and the knowledge of which has been buried with the extinction of the order who professed it. In whatever way

way, however, this opinion may be now estimated, we may be permitted to suggest, that it is by no means improbable, that in the flight sketch which is now offered of a Mythology which is daily losing ground, the principal features of the polity and doctrines of this ancient and powerful, though, in many respects, horrible hierarchy, shall one day be clearly recognized.

Even in the little legend above recited, degraded as it is by its extravagance, may we not recognize some traits of the Druidical institutions, which they so studiously concealed? May we not trace in it, something of the mode by which the Druids procured the necessary supply of members for their order? May we not trace in it, the period of the noviciate of the disciples, which, when it had elapsed, fixed their condition irrevocably; as well as the general reluctance which must have been felt by young persons, of either sex, to seclude themselves for ever from the gaieties of

the world, and to devote themselves to retirement, and a course of painful studies?

The *Shi'ichs*, or *men of peace*, are still universally believed to carry off, into their secret recesses, new born children, and women in childbed; and accordingly care is always taken that women in these circumstances, shall never be left for a moment alone, till the child is baptized, when the power of the *Shi'ichs*, with regard to them, is supposed to cease.

Is it not probable that this superstition is founded on the circumstance, that the Druids, after the overthrow of their hierarchy, would be naturally led to endeavour, by such practices, to maintain the existence of their Order? That, having retreated to caves, and deep recesses of the forest, such as the *Shi'ichs* are still believed to occupy, they should embrace every opportunity of strengthening, by such accessions, their sinking interests?

Accord-

Accordingly, we have the best grounds from history to conclude, that the Druids were enabled, by such practices, to maintain some traces of their order, for many centuries after its great catastrophe: and that some individuals of the Druids were to be found, as far down as the sixth century, in the retinue of the princes and great men, who had not yet been converted to Christianity. In Adomnan's Life of St Columba, we read of the *Mocidruidi*, (or sons of the Druids) in Scotland: and in the same work, we are informed, " That the Saint was interrupted at the castle of the king, in the discharge of his religious offices, by certain *Magi*;" and it must be observed that this term *Magi*, is the same that is employed by Pliny, to denominate the order of the Druids.

It is probable that the above incident is the same which is related in an ancient Gaelic M. S. (No. IV.) now in the possession of the Highland Society of Scotland, and noticed in the Appendix to
the

the Report on the Poems of Ossian, p. 310. From that M. S. which is considered as of the 12th, or 13th century, the following passage is extracted :

“ After this, St Columba went upon
 “ a time to the King of the Picts, name-
 “ ly Bruidhi, son of Milchu, and the
 “ gate of the castle was shut against him ;
 “ but the iron locks of the town opened
 “ instantly, through the prayers of Co-
 “ lumb Cille. Then came the son of
 “ the King, to wit, Maelchu, and his
 “ *Druid*, to argue keenly against Columb
 “ Cille, in support of paganism.

The practice of the *Shi'ichs*, of carrying off children, and women recently delivered, is illustrated by the following tradition : “ A woman, whose new born
 “ child had been conveyed by them in-
 “ to their secret abodes, was also carried
 “ thither herself, to remain, however,
 “ only until she should suckle her infant.
 “ She one day, during this period, ob-
 “ served the *Shi'ichs* busily employed in
 “ mixing various ingredients in a boiling
 cauldron ;

“ cauldron; and, as soon as the com-
 “ position was prepared, she remarked
 “ that they all carefully anointed their
 “ eyes with it, laying the remainder a-
 “ side for future use. In a moment
 “ when they were all absent, she also at-
 “ tempted to anoint her eyes with the
 “ precious drug; but had time to apply
 “ it to one eye only, when the *Dacine*
 “ *Shi* returned. But with that eye, she
 “ was henceforth enabled to see every
 “ thing as it really passed, in their secret
 “ abodes: she saw every object, not as
 “ she hitherto had done, in deceptive
 “ splendor and elegance, but in its ge-
 “ nuine colours and form. The gaudy
 “ ornaments of the apartment were re-
 “ duced to the naked walls of a gloomy
 “ cavern. Soon after, having discharged
 “ her office, she was dismissed to her own
 “ home. Still, however, she retained
 “ the faculty of seeing; with her medi-
 “ cated eye, every thing that was done,
 “ any where in her presence, by the de-
 “ ceptive art of the order. One day,
 “ amidst

“ amidst a throng of people, she chanced
 “ to observe the *Shi'ich*, or *man of peace*,
 “ in whose possession she had left her
 “ child ; though to every other eye in-
 “ visible. Prompted by maternal affec-
 “ tion, she inadvertently accosted him,
 “ and began to inquire after the welfare
 “ of her child. The *man of peace*, asto-
 “ nished at being thus recognized by one
 “ of mortal race, demanded how she had
 “ been enabled to discover him. Awed
 “ by the terrible frown of his counte-
 “ nance, she acknowledged what she had
 “ done. He spat in her eye, and extin-
 “ guished it for ever.”

The deceptive power, by which the
men of peace are believed to impose on
 the senses of mankind, is still termed, in
 the Gaelic language, *Druid'-eachd* ; found-
 ed, probably, on the opinion entertained
 of old, concerning the magical powers of
 the Druids. Deeply versed, according to
 Cæsar's information, as the Druids were, in
 the higher departments of philosophy, and
 probably acquainted with electricity, and
 various

various branches of chemistry, they might find it easy to excite the belief of their supernatural powers, in the minds of the uninitiated vulgar.

It is still believed, that the *Shi'ichs*, or *men of peace*, are present on all occasions of public entertainment, as at funerals, and weddings, and even at fairs; and that they are there busily employed, though invisible to mortal eyes, in subtracting the substantial articles and provisions exhibited there; and in substituting shadowy forms in their stead. Accordingly, it is in the memory of many, that some persons, whose faith in this Mythology was strong, used to abstain from eating any thing that was presented on such occasions, believing it to be unsubstantial and hurtful.

The peevish envy and jealousy, which the *Shi'ichs* are believed to entertain towards the human race, render the Highlander cautious of conversing freely
con-

concerning them. On Friday *, particularly, they are supposed to possess very extensive influence : they are believed on that day, in an especial manner, to be present with their rivals of mortal race ; and to be extremely jealous of what may be said concerning them : if they are spoken of on that day, it is with apparent reluctance ; and they are uniformly styled the *Daoine matha*, or *good men*.

Indeed, it is a maxim, among the Highlanders, to say nothing of them but good. Being supposed always, though invisibly present, they are, on all occasions, spoken of with respect. In general, all conversation concerning them is avoided ; and when they are casually mentioned, their apprehended displeasure is carefully averted, by adding

* Why this day is considered as peculiarly sacred to the *men of peace*, cannot now be discovered : perhaps that was the day which the Druids used to set apart for their solemn rites.

ding some propitiatory expression of praise.

May we not, it may be asked, in all this superstition, recognize the character and feelings of a once powerful order of men ; who, possessing a deep knowledge of the secrets of nature, and a philosophy, which, by the testimony of the most respectable ancient writers, was of a very exalted kind ; found themselves reduced to seek shelter in caves and forests ; deprived of the high influence they once enjoyed ; and stripped, no doubt, of the wealth which they had, through a series of ages, accumulated ? And is it not to this source, that we are to ascribe the envy and jealousy, still supposed to be entertained by their invisible representatives of later ages, against the invaders of their ancient privileges and rank ?

That this Mythology is still preserved in some degree entire, through the lapse of so many centuries, and that the same character and feelings are ascribed at

this day to the *Daoine Shi'*, that may be supposed to have belonged to the *Druids*, on the destruction of their order, should not appear surprising. There is nothing, we know, which takes a more powerful or lasting hold of the unenlightened mind, than superstitious opinions. Whilst historical facts are lost or disguised, superstitious opinions are handed down from age to age ; they are imbibed at an early period of life, and transmitted from father to son.

The *Shi'ichs* are believed, in the traditional legends of the Highlanders, to be of both sexes ; as we know, from the testimony of ancient history, the *Druids* also were. In Flavius Vopiscus*, we have the following story of the Emperor Diocletian.

“ Whilst he lived amongst the Tun-
 “ grians (now Brabant), being yet of
 “ low rank in the army, as he was one
 “ day settling the account of his board
 “ with

* In Numeriano.

“ with a *Druidess*, with whom he had
 “ lodged, she said to him, Diocletian,
 “ thou art too avaricious ; thou art too
 “ niggardly.” “ When I am Emperor,”
 “ replied he, “ I shall be generous.”
 “ Jest not, Diocletian,” said the Druid-
 “ ess, “ For Emperor thou shalt be,
 “ when thou hast slain the Boar (Aper.)”
 “ The saying sunk deep into Diocle-
 “ tian’s mind ; he hunted boars assidu-
 “ ously ; and took care always to be in
 “ at the death ; but found himself as
 “ far from the purple as ever. At
 “ length, however, on the murder of
 “ the Emperor Numerianus by his fa-
 “ ther-in-law Arrius Aper, he seized
 “ the opportunity of avenging the Em-
 “ peror’s death, and of raising himself
 “ to the purple, by plunging his sword
 “ into the heart of the assassin : “ I have
 “ now,” said he, in allusion to the
 “ prophecy of the Druidess, “ slain the
 “ fatal Boar.”

It is the general opinion, among the
 Highlanders, that mortal men have

sometimes co-habited with individuals of the *Shi'ich* race. Such mistresses are called *Leannan Shi'* ; and by their assistance, their mortal paramours have been frequently favoured with the knowledge of many things present and future, which were concealed from the rest of mankind ; particularly, it is related, that by such communications, the knowledge of the medical virtues of many herbs has been obtained. The *Daoine Shi'*, are said in their turn, to have sometimes held intercourse with mistresses of mortal race.

The following legend, which seems evidently to refer to a period previous to the extinction of the order of the Druids, is common in tradition.

“ An illustrious youth of this order,
 “ became enamoured of a fair damsel
 “ of the daughters of men: such was
 “ the love which he bore to her, that
 “ he wished for her sake, to quit the
 “ rank and happiness which he enjoyed
 “ in his sacred recess. He petitioned
 the

“ the *men of peace*, for leave to abandon
 “ their society, and to become an ordi-
 “ nary mortal : and his request was
 “ granted, on condition that he should
 “ previously supply his loss to the so-
 “ ciety, by begetting three children by
 “ his mistress, who were to be associated
 “ with their order, in his room. He
 “ joyfully embraced the terms ; and
 “ waited patiently for the period of his
 “ release. His mistress returned his
 “ love with equal ardour, and resorted
 “ every day to the *Dun-shi*’, or a *hill of*
 “ *peace*, in the forest, where her lover
 “ resided. In the course of this com-
 “ merce, the condition of his release
 “ was at length fulfilled ; and he was a-
 “ bout to be united to his mistress, in
 “ the abodes of men.

“ The brothers of the young woman,
 “ however, had for some time, observed
 “ the frequent visits which their sister
 “ made to the forest ; and became jea-
 “ lous of her intercourse with some con-
 “ cealed paramour ; one day, they watch-
 “ ed

“ ed her steps, and traced her to the
 “ *sacred hill*, the *Dun-shi*”, where they
 “ caught her in dalliance with her lover.
 “ They were strangers to his rank and
 “ order; they were ignorant of his ho-
 “ nourable intentions towards their sister,
 “ and yielding to the first fallies of their
 “ rage, they sacrificed the unfortunate
 “ youth, together with his children, to
 “ their fury.”

In this legend, there seems to be an obvious reference to a period when the *men of peace*, that is, the Druids, were considered, with the exception of the sacred mystery, and solemn obligations of their order, as mere ordinary mortals. And it would even seem, that in certain cases, and under certain conditions, those who had been initiated in these mysteries, might be relieved from their vows. All this is human, and belongs to the order of man. The shades of this ancient institution, it is true, have, with the lapse of many centuries, become very faint : but in the eye of the antiquary and philosopher,

lofopher, it may appear of fome importance, to exhibit the fainteft tints, and to concentrate, from every quarter, the remaining lights, which tend to illuftrate the hiftory of this auguft and once powerful order.



Thomas Turnbull, Printer, }
Edinburgh.









